

**Bitkov Family**  
**Legal Proceedings and Convictions in Guatemala**  
**Updated through July 30, 2021**

Date	Court	Ruling / Sentence	Those affected
2009		The Bitkov family enters Guatemala legally. There is no record of an asylum request at this time. The family obtains and begins using a variety of false documents for personal and business purposes in Guatemala.	
2010		The “Migration Case” is opened by office of the Special Prosecutor Against Impunity ( <i>Fiscal Especial Contra la Impunidad</i> ), FECI, after a complaint by Fidel Pacheco, leader of the staff union of the General Directorate of Migration ( <i>Dirección General de Migración</i> ), DGM.	
2013		Nine individuals including seven DGM officials are linked to the case and the International Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala ( <i>Comisión Internacional Contra la Impunidad en Guatemala</i> ), CICIG, becomes joint plaintiff ( <i>querellante adhesivo</i> ) in the Migration Case.	
2014		Offices of the DGM are searched. Materials are found that identify Leónidas Zaharenco or Gregorio Igor Benitez Garcia as a user of an illegal passport network. The information is confirmed by a collaborating witness on June 6, 2014.	
January 2015		An arrest warrant is issued against Igor Vladimirovich Bitkov, Irina Vyacheslavovna Bitkova and Anastasia Bitkova for the crimes of usurpation of civil status, use of falsified documents and alteration of civil status.	
20-Feb-2017	Major Risk Court D Judge: Ericka Aifán	A resolution is emitted ordering the members of the Bitkov family to stand trial.	Igor Bitkov Irina Bitkova Anastasia Bitkova
19-Oct-2017	Appeals Court, Third Chamber	A favorable ruling is issued in response to a petition on behalf of Igor Bitkov to reverse the resolution ordering the Bitkov family to stand trial.	Igor Bitkov

5-Jan-2018	Major Risk Criminal Court A Judge: Yassmin Barrios	39 persons are found guilty of various charges and sentenced to between 6 to 19 years of prison for their involvement in the Migration Case. <b>Irina Bitkova and Anastasia Bitkova are convicted of falsifying documents (sentences of 6 years each, incommutable) and altering civil status (sentences of 8 years each and a fine of \$100,000 GTQ). Igor Bitkov is convicted of the same two charges plus usurpation of civil status (additional sentence of 5 years commutable to 100 GTQ daily).</b> <a href="https://emisorasunidas.com/2018/01/05/caso-migracion-mas-de-35-condenados-a-penas-de-hasta-19-anos-de-carcel/">https://emisorasunidas.com/2018/01/05/caso-migracion-mas-de-35-condenados-a-penas-de-hasta-19-anos-de-carcel/</a>	Igor Bitkov Irina Bitkova Anastasia Bitkova
26-Apr-2018	Constitutional Court	The Appeals Court, Third Chamber ruling voiding the resolution that ordered the Bitkov family to stand trial is upheld, annulling the January 5 verdict for Igor Bitkov. The case is sent back to Judge Aifán to consider the Appeals Court arguments. <a href="https://www.prensalibre.com/guatemala/justicia/bitkov-familia-rusa-presa-en-guatemala-podria-quedar-en-libertad/">https://www.prensalibre.com/guatemala/justicia/bitkov-familia-rusa-presa-en-guatemala-podria-quedar-en-libertad/</a> <a href="https://cc.gob.gt/2018/04/26/resolucion-6098-2017-acum-6130-2017-caso-bitkov/">https://cc.gob.gt/2018/04/26/resolucion-6098-2017-acum-6130-2017-caso-bitkov/</a>	Igor Bitkov
9-May-2018	Major Risk Court D Judge: Ericka Aifán	A new resolution is emitted again ordering Igor Bitkov to stand trial. <a href="https://www.guatevision.com/noticias/nacional/igor-bitkov-es-beneficiado-con-arresto-domiciliario">https://www.guatevision.com/noticias/nacional/igor-bitkov-es-beneficiado-con-arresto-domiciliario</a>	Igor Bitkov
28-May-2018	Major Risk Court D Judge: Ericka Aifán	A petition to release Igor Bitkov to house arrest for health reasons pending a new trial is granted. A similar petition for Irina and Anastasia Bitkova is denied because the April 26 Constitutional Court ruling granted relief only to Igor Bitkov. <a href="https://www.perspectiva.gt/noticias/jueza-otorga-libertad-condicional-a-igor-bitkov/">https://www.perspectiva.gt/noticias/jueza-otorga-libertad-condicional-a-igor-bitkov/</a>	Igor Bitkov
6-Jun-2018	Major Risk Appeals Court, Second Chamber	A petition for house arrest instead of prison for Irina Bitkova and Anastasia Bitkova is granted and their bail is reduced. <a href="https://www.pressreader.com/guatemala/prensa-libre/20180608/281668255672471">https://www.pressreader.com/guatemala/prensa-libre/20180608/281668255672471</a>	Irina Bitkova Anastasia Bitkova

28-Dec-2018	Major Risk Court D Judge: Sara Yoc	<b>Igor Bitkov is found guilty a second time on two counts: use of falsified documents (2 years suspended) and suppression/alteration of civil status (5 years incommutable). He is absolved of usurpation of civil status.</b> <a href="https://apnews.com/article/29263045685d4066a28ea87058ce95fc">https://apnews.com/article/29263045685d4066a28ea87058ce95fc</a>	Igor Bitkov
31-Jul-2019		According to news reports, the Morales government granted refugee status to the three members of the Bitkov family. <a href="https://www.soy502.com/articulo/jimmy-morales-concedio-estatus-refugio-familia-bitkov-5313">https://www.soy502.com/articulo/jimmy-morales-concedio-estatus-refugio-familia-bitkov-5313</a>	Igor Bitkov Irina Bitkova Anastasia Bitkova
20-Jul-2020	Major Risk Appeals Court, Second Chamber	<b>The guilty conviction for the defendants tried in the criminal process known as the Migration Case, including Irina Bitkova and Anastasia Bitkova, is upheld.</b> <a href="https://republica.gt/2020/07/20/caso-migracion-sala-confirma-condena-contra-familia-de-origen-ruso/">https://republica.gt/2020/07/20/caso-migracion-sala-confirma-condena-contra-familia-de-origen-ruso/</a>	Irina Bitkova Anastasia Bitkova
15-Jul-2021	Major Risk Appeals Court, Second Chamber	<b>Igor Bitkov's sentence of a total of 7 years prison, incommutable, for use of falsified documents and alteration of civil status is confirmed.</b> The conditional suspension of the 2-year sentence for falsified documents is revoked. <a href="https://lahora.gt/reves-para-igor-bitkov-sala-confirma-sentencia-en-su-contra/">https://lahora.gt/reves-para-igor-bitkov-sala-confirma-sentencia-en-su-contra/</a>	Igor Bitkov
18-Jul-2021	Guatemalan Institute for Migration (IGM)	IGM confirms that criminal convictions against members of the Bitkov family do not affect their refugee status. <a href="https://lahora.gt/estatus-de-refugiado-otorgado-a-bitkov-no-seria-afectado-por-condena/">https://lahora.gt/estatus-de-refugiado-otorgado-a-bitkov-no-seria-afectado-por-condena/</a>	Igor Bitkov Irina Bitkova Anastasia Bitkova